



Sonargaon University (SU)

Research Monograph On “Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problems and Way out”

**Research Monograph Submitted for the partial fulfillment of the award of the degree in
LL.M (Master's)
Department of Law
Sonargaon University (SU)**

Submitted To

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Letter of Transmittal

To

Muhammad Ali

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Subject: Submission of Research Monograph **“Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problems and Way out”**

Dear Sir,

This is a great pleasure to submit the Research Monograph on **“Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problems and Way out”** as a partial requirement for the fulfillment of my LL.M course under the Department of Law of the Sonargaon University (SU).

I have given due efforts to make this Research Monograph as fruitful one and to make it as informative as possible. I hope that this paper will not be the formality of academic course completion rather it will be a source of information for other purpose on this topic.

Yours sincerely

.....

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Declaration

I do hereby declare that the Research Monograph Title “**Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problems and Way out**” prepared solely by me and which has been submitted to the department of Law, Sonargaon University (SU) for achieving the LL.M (Master’s) Degree. This is an original work of mine. No part of this research, in any way of or in from, has been submitted to any University or Institution for any Degree, Diploma or for other similar purposes.

.....

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Supervisor Certificate

This is to certify that the work presented in this dissertation is based on the work, carried out by the author herself under my supervision in Department of Law, Sonargaon University (SU).

It is also certifying that the work presented here is original and suitable for submission as the style and contents, for fulfillment of LL.M. program.

.....

Muhammad Ali

Lecturer

Department of Law

Sonargaon University (SU)

Acknowledgement

***In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful".** Praise by Allah & thanks to Allah for patronizing me to finish this Research Monograph. I am very happy to finish it. It is a great Research of my life. It is a long cherished hope of my life to become a great lawyer. That's why I have admitted in the Department of Law in Sonargaon University (SU) to fulfill my dream. But through my whole study life in this field, I did not get much more opportunities to examine and show my knowledge and skill in this wide field. Lastly I have got a great chance to make my study meaningful when I got the chance to prepare a Research Monograph on **“Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problems and Way out”**

I acknowledge my grateful to respected course teacher **Muhammad Ali** for instructing me how to prepare a Research Monograph and his famous Books lectures on this subject help me to complete my task sincerely.

I am also thankful to my classmate as they help me to complete the Research Monograph. I am extremely paying my solitude to all the authors and writers whose works help me to draft this original Research Monograph.

We are indeed thanks to everyone who inspired us to write this Research Monograph.

Thank you

Tazin Sharif

List of Abbreviations

IT	: Information technology
MDG	: Millennium Development Goals
UNDP	: United Nations Development Program
NCWCD	: National Council for Woman and Child Development
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
NER	: Net Enrolment Rate
GER	: Gross Enrolment rate
LFPR	: Labor Force Participation Rate
BNP	: Bangladesh National Party
UNO	: United Nation Organization
UP	: Up level
ADP	: Annual Development Program
NGO	: Non-governmental organization
GO	: Government organization
NER	: Net enrolment Rate
CEDAW	: Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
FOI	: Freedom of Information
ICCPR	: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Right
UNO	: Upazilla Nirbahi Officer
UP	: Union Parishad

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Abstract

Bangladesh is a developing country half of the total population is women whose socio-economic condition is very low. Struggle for modernity, tradition, men-women equality, social dignity, security and for multilateral pressure the position of women in the family is very complex. Here men and women do not participate in social development is not equal. Many indoor and outdoor activities of women are not treated as work. The devaluation of women labor in labor market also hinders women right. But in market economy women of Bangladesh are always facing new challenges. Though women work in educational institution, medical, factories, police, even in the uneven areas, women are neglected, tortured and persecuted. In the society of gender disparity it is difficult for women to stay parallel and enjoy the right of equal participant. Bangladeshi women have made massive gains since the country achieved its independence in 1971. The past four decades have seen increased political empowerment for women, better job prospects, improved education and the adoption of new laws to protect their rights. As of 2013, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, the Speaker of Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition and the Foreign minister were women. However, issues like domestic violence, acid burning and rape still is a major problem in the backward society in Bangladesh. But the government and other activist are trying to reduce this problem in different ways. The awareness is increased than before. Hope these problems will be solved very soon and we will see nobody will through acid or create violence as they did before.

Chapter One

Introductory Chapter

1.1 Introduction

Women Empowerment refers to strengthening the social, economic and educational powers of women. It refers to an environment where there is no gender bias and has equal rights in community, society and workplaces.

Women population is around 50% of the total population of the world. They have every right to be treated equally with men in every sphere of life and society.

The empowerment of women would result in overall development of society both at micro and macro level. Active participation of women in economic activities and decisions, would contribute towards overall economic development.

The women's strategic needs are here defined as to increase the women's bargaining capacity, reduce violence against women and make them gain more influence over decision-making. Encountered: Multi-dimensional difficulties and constraints have been encountered in the work for women's empowerment. Most of the violence towards women in Bangladesh takes place within the households. The reported cases of violence are increasing. There are two reasons for this. First of all the increased awareness of violence against women has facilitated uncovering occurrence of violence. Secondly, rural women are at a crossroad now and have been faced with the ideology of patriarchy, which help reinforce the power hierarchies within the family. The increasing trend of violence against women should therefore be explained as the outcome of a contradiction against the ideology of patriarchy, manifested in social restrictions against women's mobility, the system of early marriage for girls, restriction on negotiation rights etc. A classic case of patriarchy is the assumption that the male must exercise control over women by limiting her mobility to the home. Such control of female sexuality is further elevated by creating an image of the mother as divine and women who do not live up to the ideal, as fallen women. In Bangladesh the family is the breeding grounds for some of the most persistent discrimination against women, such as sexual subordination of women, restriction of the mobility of women and different access to resources within the family.

1.2 Objective of the Research

The main purpose of this research work is to fulfill the partial requirement of L.L.M. program some other specific objectives are:

- To find out the Organizational and Institutional Transition of Women empowerment in Bangladesh
- To identify the reason why woman are Discriminated
- To know the preventions law of Discrimination against Women.
- To find out suitable way of betterment woman empowerment.

1.3 Research Methodology

To make a quick but comprehensive report of the woman empowerment in Bangladesh problem and way out, situation in Bangladesh the present study made use of both ordinary observation and survey finding and secondary source. In the case of direct observation and survey finding an in depth study of three as the International woman organization, Mass line Media center, Bangladesh Nari o shishu Adhikar Forum, The study also utilized secondary sources such as former studies conducted on woman empowerment. Additional information from the web also obtains to supplement the study.

1.4 Limitation of the research

The research work is confined to the empowerment in Bangladesh. In doing the research work I faced some difficulties. I did not find sufficient books on this topic in our library. Further there is little in this topic. Mainly it is not possible to complete a work so far done in Bangladesh comprehensive research in an area like woman empowerment within four months.

1.5 Outline of the Chapters

I completed this research on Women Empowerment in Bangladesh: Problem and Way Out. I have been organized this research in it in seven chapters.

In Chapter One, I have discussed objectives, methodology and limitation of the research elaborately.

In Chapter Two, I have discussed about Women Empowerment, basic principles of the women empowerment and the necessity of the women empowerment and the reasoning of women empowerment.

In Chapter Three, I have discussed the Women Empowerment in Bangladesh, Government Initiative for women empowerment, Women Empowerment in the Constitution of Bangladesh and Implementation of Constitutional Structure.

In Chapter Four, I have discussed the major problem women face in Bangladesh like Rap, Child marriage, Educational inequality and unsafe work place, Sexual harassment, Domestic violence.

In Chapter Five, , I have discussed concerning law related to the women empowerment, National Woman Development Policy, The object of National Development Policy and Citizenship Act 2009 The Mobile court Act 2009, Prevention abuse of woman.

In Chapter Six, , I have discussed present condition of women in our society, Institutional Framework and Strategy, National Level & Upazilla Level, Co-operation with NGOs and Social Organizations in Women Development, Research on Woman and Gender Equality, Work Plan and Program Strategy. Financial System, Co-operation Between GO and NGO, Women Empowerment and International Co-operation.

In Chapter Seven, I have discussed some findings of the study and recommendations. It is the concluding chapter of this research monograph.

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Chapter Two

Conceptual Analysis on women empowerment

2.1 Women Empowerment

Women have a distinct role to play in the development of a nation. As a mother she shapes the personality and character' of her children; thus, the character of the nation. As a housewife, she maintains the productivity of the human capital for making a contribution to the national economy. United Nations has rightly observed that women constitute 48 percent of the total population and nearly perform two-thirds of the work and produce fifty percent of food commodities consumed. However, they earn one third of the remuneration and own only 10 percent of the property or wealth of the country.¹ All these above observations compel us to assume that women enjoy an unequal. Status vis-a-vis man in our society. Thus, disempowerment of women is a great loss to the nation. Empowerment of women, therefore, has become a dominant feature of our development agenda. 'Empowering women' implies developing them as more aware humans who are socially developed, politically active and economically productive. Moreover, this development would enable them to make judicious choices and intelligent decisions in matters that affect their lives.² It helps women to become more aware of their constitutional and legal rights and of the opportunities available for them to make their lives better. Precisely speaking, empowerment helps women to evolve as workers, citizens and human beings. It serves as a powerful instrument for them to attain upward social and economic mobility and enhance status in society. Hence, it is pertinent to understand the concept of 'empowerment'³

2.2 Basic Principles of Women's Empowerment

There are some basic principle follow to established or recognizing women empowerment, this are:

Principle 1: Leadership Promotes Gender Equality

a. Affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and human rights. b. Establish company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers' performance reviews.

¹NerelaKbiir, 'Women Empowerment and Present situation' Science Direct Volume 29 Issue 1 Pg 63-84

² Ibid Pg-4

³ ReechaUpadhyay 'WomenEmpowerment : An Analytical Overview ' (The Asia Foundation Website 2025) <<https://asiafoundation.org/resources//womens empowermentindia/briefs.>>Accessed 1 Nov 2025

c. Engage internal and external stakeholders in the development of company policies, programmers and implementation plans that advance equality.⁴

Principle 2: Equal Opportunity, Inclusion and Nondiscrimination

- a. Pay equal remuneration, including benefits, for work of equal value and strive to pay a living wage to all women and men.
- b. Ensure that workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination.
- c. Implement gender-sensitive recruitment and retention practices and proactively recruit and appoint women to managerial and executive positions and to the corporate board of directors.
- d. Assure sufficient participation of women – 30% or greater – in decision-making and governance at all levels and across all business areas.
- e. Offer flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status.
- f. Support access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men.⁵

Principle 3: Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence

- a. Taking into account differential impacts on women and men, provide safe working conditions and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health.
- b. Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse, and prevent sexual harassment.
- c. Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services – including for survivors of domestic violence – and ensure equal access for all employees.
- d. Respect women and men workers’ rights to time off for medical care and counseling for themselves and their dependents.
- e. In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work and on company-related business.⁶

⁴ United Nation Development Funds for Women ‘Women Empowerment Principles’ (Published on UN Website 2024) <<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/119470/12/12>>accessed 2Nov 2025

⁵ Ibid Pg-5

⁶ Ibid Pg-6

Principle 4: Education and Training

- a. Invest in workplace policies and programs that open avenues for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas, and encourage women to enter nontraditional job fields.
- b. Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programmes, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training. .⁷

2.3 Necessity of Women Empowerment

Every child learns from their mother so the foundation of the society is laid down by none other than the women. By educating them properly we can certainly ensure a well-educated family. Gone are the days when women were not taught but today a lot of revolution has come and women are now learning and exploring life⁸. Still, the women from the developing and under developed countries are not getting enough opportunities to grow and therefore they are lagging behind in everything. So if you want the foundation to be strong, it is essential to empower the women as this will bring a huge revolution. They will be able to stand on their feet and play a crucial role in their family and outside both. This will help to build a better society where everyone is equal.⁹ Women's economic empowerment refers to the ability for women to enjoy their right to control and benefit from resources, assets, income and their own time, as well as the ability to manage risk and improve their economic status and wellbeing. While often interchangeably used, the more comprehensive concept of gender empowerment refers to people of any gender, stressing the distinction between biological sex and gender as a role. It thereby also refers to other marginalized genders in a particular political or social context.¹⁰

Women's Empowerment educates and empowers women, who are homeless, with the skills and confidence necessary to secure a job, create a healthy lifestyle, and regain a home for themselves and their children. The entry of women into a specific trade signaled a downgrading of the trade. With industrialization, women still earned one-third to one-half of men's wages. New occupations were added for women over time, but these for the most

⁷ Ibid Pg-6

⁸ Joynul Abedin ' Women Empowerment In Bangladesh' Papers SSRN, 2020 January, Volume 3, Issue 1 Pg- 27

⁹ Mohak Rana, AC ADEMIKE Articles on legal issues, Schemes and Strategies for Women Empowerment, (31 August 20014) <<https://www.lawctopus.com/academike/schemes-strategies-for-women-empowerment>> Accessed 5 Nov 2025.

¹⁰ Sheryl Sandberg, Lean In : Women Empowerment, 1st Edition, Published March 11th 2013, Pg- 34

part were ones previously filled by males, but downgraded in status and pay for women. These jobs included secretaries and typists in businesses, store clerks in the new department stores, and teaching. Increased demarcation in the industrial economy was the strict delineation between men's and women's work.¹¹ Women empowerment is all about making them self-dependent on taking the decisions of life irrespective of the fear of the people and the society. In today's time, the condition of the women is deteriorating day by day with less attention paid to them.

2.4 Why women empower is necessary in our country

Help in better decision-making power: Women empowerment gives every woman the right to take her decisions whether it is related to the family or to their work. They are free to decide what they want to do. Just like men do everything they wish to, similarly, the women too should share equal right to do things as per their wish. This is only possible if we women understand our powers and utilize it to the fullest. Taking that very first step is necessary and it comes when one gets the power.¹²

Establish their Self-image: Even women have their own identity and it is important to maintain the same. In the olden times, the women were given the name of their husbands but today time has changed and women love to carry their own identity in every walk of life. Whether they are a housewife or working professional, their identity means everything for them. This is definitely a good sign that women are finally moving out of the four walls of their home and taking a big step.

Move ahead in their life: Women need to change their mindset that they are not just meant to remain within their home but move outside to live their own life. They have the choice to decide whether they like to work or indulge in other activities. Even the men should understand this and help the women around them to move ahead in life. This will fill the gap between men and women and offer them an equal status which was never given to them.¹³

¹¹Avanish Pandey Women's Empowerment: a Conceptual Analysis Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education, Volume 8, Issue 16, Oct, 2025

¹² Ibid Pg-7

¹³Rofiquel Haque, Centre research and information 'Women Empowerment'(CRI Website 1Sep) <<http://importanceofstuff.com/women-empowerment>>Accessed 7 nov 2025

Chapter Three

Empowerment of Women in Bangladesh

3.1 Women Empowerment in Bangladesh

The majority of the world's poorest billion people are women and girls with the share of women employed outside of agriculture remains as low as 20 percent in Southern Asia.¹⁴ Around Bangladesh, it is women and girls who are disproportionately affected by poverty and discrimination. Often, women and girls are not allowed to make decisions about their household's income, or tradition and culture forbid them to leave their homes. In other words, half of the population cannot contribute to their family's and community's economic development. A great resource goes untapped. But women are an important part of the solutions needed to truly overcome poverty. They play a key role in navigating their family and their community to a better life.¹⁵ Our experience shows us that when equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help their families and entire communities escape poverty.¹⁶ When women earn an income, they reinvest 90 percent of it in their families while for every year a girl spends in school she raises her family income by up to 20 percent. Additionally, educated girls grow into educated women, who have healthier babies and are more likely to educate their children. It's a simple formula: empowerment is the total sum of changes needed for a woman to realize her full human rights. Empowerment is not just about giving women training or a loan. Empowerment is more than that. It means that relationships and social structures that shape the lives of women and girls must change.¹⁷ Women's empowerment can only be achieved when we include men and boys. Men are often those who define and keep women within their boundaries. CARE Bangladesh is focused on women exercising greater choice in decisions affecting their lives; reduced violence against women; and the emergence of strong social movements built on women's solidarity and participation of men.¹⁸

¹⁴Government: Bangladesh Union Parishad Perspective,' Asian Affairs, Volume 29, No 1, Pg73-9

¹⁵ Dr. Mohammad Moinul, 'Women's Empowerment In Bangladesh 'CARE Bangladesh, Volume 3, 2026
Pg-1 < http://www.carebangladesh.org/publication_list.pub=WomeEmpowerment> Accessed 7 Nov 2025

¹⁶ Ibid Pg-9

¹⁷ Ibid Pg-9

¹⁸ Md Abdulhaque 'women empowerment and present satiation 'Care Bangladesh 'Dhaka 22 April 2025
<http://www.carebangladesh.org/publication_Women%20Empowerment> acces on 7 nov 2017

3.2-Government Initiative

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been conferred with the “Agent of Change” award and “Planet 50-50 Champion” honor for her outstanding contributions to women empowerment. The UN Women recognized the PM as Planet 50-50 Champion, while the Global Partnership Forum honored her with the award at a reception at the UN headquarters on Wednesday. President of the Republic of Malta Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and First Lady of the United Nations Ban Soon-taek were also given the honors along with the Bangladesh premier. Receiving the award, Hasina said: “I feel humbled by these recognitions... I thank UN Women and Global Partnership Forum for giving me this honor.” She said the honor was a big recognition for Bangladeshi women as the true agents of change. “This is recognition for our women working in equal partnership with our men.... I dedicate the awards to the people of Bangladesh for having faith in my vision for change.”¹⁹ Since assuming office in 2009, the Awami League government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has initiated various programmes and projects for the development of women. Women’s development and empowerment form a crucial aspect of the government’s overall vision. The Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-2015) of the Bangladesh government considers women’s engagement in political and economic activities as a cross-cutting issue and one of the main drivers of transformation. The current government is committed to attaining the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of gender equality and empowering women as well as implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action. Bangladesh has already substantially achieved the MDG3 as it has secured gender parity in primary and secondary education at the national level, among other successes. Bangladesh has been working relentlessly to ensure women’s overall development by affording them equal and active participation in the mainstream socio-economic activities and removing the various impediments to their empowerment.²⁰ The government formed Women Rehabilitation Board in 1972, Bangladesh Women Rehabilitation Welfare Foundation in 1974, National Women's organization in 1976 and Ministry of Women Affairs in 1978 with the objective of women development. The Women Affairs Directorate was formed in 1984

¹⁹Moinul Haque ‘Sheikh Hasina Awarded for Women Empowerment, The Daily Star Dhaka 23 Sep 2025 <<http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/pm-awarded-women-empowerment3>> Accessed 8 Nov 2025

²⁰ Ibid Pg-10

and it was upgraded to Department of Women Affairs in 1990.²¹ The Women Affairs Ministry was renamed as 'Ministry of Women and Children Affairs' in 1994 in which Children Affairs was included. National Women Training and Development Academy, Career Women's Hostel, Children's Daycare center, Farming Training center for Women and Begum Rokeya Training center have been set up under the Women Affairs Department. Programs have been taken up in all districts and Upazilla concerning non-formal education, vocational training and widespread awareness raising activity. The National Women Organization is implementing Women Development Program in 64 districts and 50 Upazillas. Bangladesh Shishu Academy was founded in 1976 for the socio-cultural and mental growth of the children. Over and above, a 50 member National Council for Women and Child Development (NCWCD) has been formed with PM in the Chair for review of the socioeconomic development of women at national level, policy making and implementation of development programs. An inter-ministerial women and child abuse prevention committee has been formed to establish rights and resist abuse of women. Woman and Child Abuse Prevention Cell and Women abuse Prevention Committee at district and 12 Upazilla levels have been formed in Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Women Affairs Department and National Women Organization have been formed. An integrated initiative has been taken to work together aimed at women development at both public and private sector levels.²²

3.3 Women Empowerment in the Constitution of Bangladesh

The Constitution was written for the newly formed state of Bangladesh in 1972. The Constitution made under the directives of the Father of the Nation ensured human and fundamental rights of women. In article 27 of the constitution has it that, "all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law". The article 28(1) says, "the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth" The article 28(2) says, "women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life." The article 28(3) has it that, no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability,

²¹Israt Jahan 'The rehabilitation and emancipation of the war-affected women of 1971' The Daily Star, Bangladesh 12:26 PM, December 08, 2025 <<http://www.thedailystar.net/liberating-the-women-of-1971>> Accessed 9 Nov 2025

²² Naila Kabeer, Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment Resources, Agency, Achievements 1st Edition 1999 July Pg 57

restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.” Article 28(4) says, “Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making special provision in favor of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens.” Article 29(1) contains, “there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the republic.” Article 29(2) has it that “no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the republic.” In the article 65(3) there are 45 seats reserved for women and under article 9 the representation of women in the development of local government institutions.²³

3.4 Implementation of Constitutional Structure

1. The objectives of National Women Development
2. Making sure Women's Human Rights and Fundamental Rights Development of Female Children Elimination of all kinds of Children Abuse
3. Armed Conflicts and the State of Women Education and Training
4. Ensuring Active Participation of Women in All National Economic Activities and Equal Rights.
5. Elimination of Poverty of Women Economic Empowerment of Women
6. Employment of Women
7. Women and Technology
8. Food Security of Women
9. Women and Agriculture
10. Political Empowerment of Women
11. Administrative Empowerment of Women
12. Health and Nutrition
13. Housing and Shelter
14. Women and Environment
15. Security and Safety of Women and Children in Pre, Post and During Disasters
16. Special Programs for the Women of Backward and Small Ethnic Groups.
17. Special Program for Disabled Women

²³Article 27 of The Constitution of People's Republic of Bangladesh

18. Women and the Mass Media Particularly Vulnerable Women Group.²⁴

²⁴Ibid Pg-12

Chapter Four

The major problems women face in Bangladesh.

4.1 Education of Women

Bangladesh's socio-cultural environment contains pervasive gender discrimination, so girls and women face many obstacles to their development. Girls are often considered to be financial burdens on their family, and from the time of birth, they receive less investment in their health, care and education. With the advent of puberty, differences in the ways that adolescent girls and boys are treated become much more pronounced. Adolescence is not viewed as a distinct phase of life; instead the onset of physical maturity is seen as an abrupt shift from childhood to adulthood. At puberty, girls' mobility is often restricted, which limits their access to livelihood, learning and recreational and social activities.²⁵ Bangladesh was the first country in South Asia to achieve gender-parity in primary education. Achieving this milestone is a result of effective public policy, resource allocation and strong commitment from public and non-government sectors. Primary education is compulsory and free for all children aged between age 6 and 10. All children attending primary and secondary schools receive textbooks free of cost. The education of girls up to grade XII in public institutions is also free. To encourage girl students to continue their studies and also to reduce drop-out rates, stipends are awarded. This proactive strategy for girls' education resulted in gender parity. For example, in primary schools, female enrolment is now 51% and in secondary schools it is now 53%, while male is 47 percent, a sharp departure from even just a few years ago when male was 65% and female was 35%.²⁶

4.2 Workforce participation

Women in Bangladesh are engaged in many work activities, from domestic work inside the home, to outside paid work. Women's work is often undervalued and under-reported.²⁷

Conventionally, work is defined as any activity undertaken in lieu of remuneration. The value of work is determined by the level of remuneration. Therefore, any work undertaken without remuneration is considered non-valuable and non-work. On the other hand, any

²⁵UNICEF, State of the World's Children: The Double Dividend of Gender Equality, 2020

<https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/Women_and_girlsin_Bangladesh> Accessed 14 Nov 2025

²⁶ Wikipedia, Women in Bangladesh < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_Bangladesh> Accessed 14 Nov 2025

²⁷ Ibid Pg-14

work done outside, such as office, factory, field is considered more valuable than work done at home. The conclusion therefore is, men work outside, get remuneration so their work is valuable. Women work at home, get no remuneration, therefore their work is considered non-work having no or little value.²⁸

Gender gaps in employment are different across the region: in South East Asian countries, the gap between the percentage of women and men working is lower than in South Asian countries. In 2015, in Lao PDR, for every 100 men employed, 19 there were 105 employed women; in Sri Lanka the ratio was 100 to 42, and in Pakistan, 100 to 27.20 In countries where women's economic participation is at much lower rates than men, strong cultural norms are a factor. 21 In countries with high female employment but where small-scale, household farming is prevalent, for example Lao PDR, often the higher rate is due to women being engaged in their household's farming activities. 22 When countries start to industrialize, women's participation rates often fall as they do not take up the paid work opportunities created outside the home at the same rates as men.²⁹ On December 5, 2001, Nari Uddug Kendra (NUK) spearheaded the development of the Bangladesh Garment Workers Protection Alliance (BGWPA) with 24 organizations and other associations working for the rights of garment workers, of which about 80-90 percent are women. These organizations have invested their time and resources to ensure that the rights of the workers are protected and their voices heard during discussions related to the crisis in the ready-made garment (RMG) sector in both domestic and international forums. BGWPA is a non-partisan affiliation of non-governmental organizations, trade unions, workers organizations and other groups as well as individuals and activists concerned with the plights of garment workers. BGWPA works through a secretariat based at NUK, and has eight subcommittees: (1) information and research, (2) local and international communication, (3) legal rights and compensation, (4) employment generation and skills training, (5) social mobilization, (6) media campaigning, (7) advocacy, and (8) management. More recently, the Alliance has

28 Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation, Women's 'work is often undervalued and under-reported' The Daily Star, Bangladesh, 4 Feb 2025

<<http://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/25th-anniversary-special-part-4/womens-work-unrecognised-and-undervalued-212014>> Accessed 14 Nov 2025

²⁹ Oxfam Issue Briefing Unpaid and Underpaid Work in Asia' Yangon, November 2025.

<https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/ib-inequality-womens-> Accessed 14 Nov 2025

reached an agreement with the leadership of RMG sector, but the agreement has not been implemented yet in all garment factories.³⁰

4.3 Land and Property rights

Women's inheritance rights are poor: discriminatory laws and patriarchal social norms make it difficult for many women to have access to land. Most women inherit according to the local interpretations of Sharia Law.³¹ A woman's right to property, her powers to make household financial decisions, and her access to credit, productive resources and extension services all directly affect her family's health, nutrition and financial well-being. In the context of Bangladesh women has limited power to make financial decisions and access to right the property. Legal or social restrictions prevent many women from owning or inheriting land, water rights or livestock, borrowing money and making decisions regarding the use of family assets. This has a direct and detrimental impact on their ability to manage security.³²

4.4 Rape

Rape is prevailing in Bangladesh with an alarming condition. It is the most common and vicious form of violence against woman in Bangladesh.¹ In Bangladesh, police statistics on cases registered on violence against women (VAW) show that rape is the second most commonly reported form of violence against women, following dowry related harassment.² According to Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), total 527 incidents of rape or attempt to rape was documented between January and September 2014 in Bangladesh. Among these only 291 cases were filed, 43 victims died after rape and 11 other committed suicide. It is one of the silent sexual crimes against women and girls. Many women never report the rapes³³

No age is safe from rape, as children of one year or less and old woman of 85 years have been reported.⁶ In 2013 a total number of 814 females were raped, among them 452 were children below the age of 16 and 127 were victims of gang rape.⁷ In Bangladesh 1,479

³⁰ Mohammad Samiul Islam, 'Women's Empowerment in Bangladesh: A Case Study of Two NGOs' Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), <http://www.bangladeshstudies.org/files/WPS_no23> accessed on 25 Oct 2025

³¹ Shah I Mobin Jinnah' Land and Property Rights of Rural Women in Bangladesh' 1st Edition January 2013, Pg- 6

³² Chaudhury, Rafiqul Huda and Nilufer Raihan Ahmed, 1980. "Female Status in Bangladesh" Bangladesh Institute of Development Studie Volume XXXIX, March-June 2025

³³ Professor & Head, Dept. of Forensic Medicine ,Women Health in Bangladesh ,Delta Medical College, Dhaka, Bangladesh DMCJ, Jan 2025 Volume3 ,Issue1

women had been raped in six months during January of 2025 to June of 2025. Now the number is increasing day by day. Every day we see in newspaper the rape related news.³⁴

4.5 Child marriage

Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world.³⁵ The practice of dowry, although illegal, contributes to this phenomenon. 29% of girls get married before age 15 and 65% before the age of 18.³⁶ Government action has had little effect, and has been contradictory: although the government has pledged to end child marriage by 2041, the Prime Minister in 2015 attempted to lower the age of marriage for girls from 18 to 16. An exception to the law was instituted so that marriage at 16 is permitted with parental consent³⁷

4.6 Domestic violence

In Bangladesh, 87 percent of women victims of domestic violence.³⁸ In 2010, Bangladesh enacted the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010.³⁹ Domestic violence (DV) is accepted by a significant percentage of the population: in the 2011 DHS survey, 32.5% of women said that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for specific reasons (the most common reason given was if the wife "argues with him" at 22.4%).⁴⁰ In recent years violence towards women, committed by men, has decreased significantly and is considerably low compared to south Asian countries like Sri Lanka Nepal and

³⁴Arzu A 'Women Repression Unabated Despite Stringent Law 1,479 Rape Cases Recorded in 6 month Months.The Daily Star Bangladesh 17, Oct <<http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details>>. Accessed 15 Nov 2020

³⁵ UNICEF 'Early marriage in Bangladesh Problem and solution', UNICEF website 27 August 2025 <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/children_4866.htm> Accessed 15 Nov 2020

³⁶Amit Misra 'Human Rights Watch 'Bangladesh : Present situation' (June 9, 2015 12:45AM EDT) <<https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/06/09/bangladesh-girls-damaged-child-marriage>> Accessed 16 Nov 2025

³⁷Mansur Hussain 'Child Marriage in Bangladesh and its bad sight' Prothom Alo Bangladesh 7 March 2011 <<http://en.prothom-alo.com/bangladesh/news/60481/Age-of-marriage-18-but-16-with-parental-consent-women-in-bangladesh-consent>> Accessed 15 Nov 2025

³⁸ Sumon Gurye, Domestic Violence in Bangladesh and common problem, Asia News. IT, 3 March 2014 <<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/In-Bangladesh,-87-per-cent-of-women-victims-of-domestic-violence-against-women-in-bangladesh>> Accessed 15 Nov 2025

³⁹ Subbir Rahman 'Domestic Violence Against Women' Prothom Alo, Bangladesh 4th April 2011 <<http://en.prothom-alo.com/bangladesh/news/60481/domestic-violence-in-bangladesh>> Accessed 15 Nov 2025

⁴⁰ Bangladesh Demographic and health survey Published On 11 March 2020 <<https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR265/FR265>> Accessed 16 Nov 2025

India.⁴¹ Violence towards women is a crime. Awareness rising is necessary to uphold women's human rights.

4.7 Dowry

Dowry is the transferring parental property at the marriage of a daughter,⁴² referred as the money, goods or estate that a wife brings to her husband at marriage and it contrasts with bride price paid to the bride's parents and dower, which is property settled on the bride herself by their grooms at the time of marriage.⁴³ In Bangladesh, dowry is a pattern of marriage payments settled openly or discreetly mostly before the wedding. The practice of the payment of dowry during marriage has developed in the society mainly in the 1970s. In course of time, this social evil has become endemic which is seriously affecting the lives of married women. In her well written book titled “Crime or Custom? Dowry Practice in Rural Bangladesh”, Shahan Nasrin, a Sociologist at the University of Dhaka, has made an attempt to address the reasons behind the prevalent practice of dowry in Bangladesh.⁴⁴ Despite a number of laws and ordinances criminalizing dowry and related violence against women, victims are increasingly seeking solutions outside the court as legal battles cost too much and take too long for them to bear.⁴⁵ Contrary to our expectations, domestic violence against women especially because of dowry has increased, largely thanks to lack of implementation of the existing laws and slack monitoring of law enforcement officials,” said Advocate Salma Ali, executive director of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA)⁴⁶

⁴¹ Goody, Jack (1976). Production and Reproduction: A Comparative Study of the Domestic Domain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pg-6.

⁴² Ibid Pg-17

⁴³ Khan Rahman Saira, ‘The socio –legal status of Bengali women in Bangladesh,’ 1st Edition 2024 Pg-26

⁴⁴ Mohammad Abu Taher, ‘Dowry practice in Bangladesh’ The Daily Star Bangladesh March 08, 2015 <<http://www.thedailystar.net/dowry-practice-in-rural-bangladesh-52912>> accessed 17 Nov 2025

⁴⁵ Udeisha Islam, ‘Dowry related violence : Victims opting for out of court solutions’ Dhaka Tribunal Volume 3 Issue 3

⁴⁶ Ibid Pg-18

Violence against women dowry : January and February 2026

108 women physically tortured, 126 women tortured to death and 95 cases filed⁴⁷

4.8 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is an unwelcome behavior which is conducted by men to women or men to men or women to women or women to men. Both men and women can be subjected to sexual harassment, but women are much more likely to be affected by it due to the unequal gender relations prevalent in many societies.⁴⁸ In Bangladesh, women are the main victim of sexual harassment. Overwhelming majority of women, who are going outside from their home every day for education, work or for other needs, are being sexually harassed by men every day. Hundreds of women are raped and sexually assaulted every year. Incidents of sexual harassment are increasing day by day⁴⁹ Women get sexually harassed more at public places in Bangladesh.

⁴⁷ Ain O Salis Kendra, 'Violence Against Women – Dowry ' :January-December 2026

<<http://www.askbd.org/ask/2025/01/08/dowry-january-december-2025/>>accessed18 Nov 2022

⁴⁸ MdJahidurRahman 'Sexual harassment against women' Daily Sun, Bangladesh 11 June 2023

<<http://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/232822/Sexual-Harassment-against-Women>>accessed18 nov2017

⁴⁹ Dhaka Tribune ,Newaz Farhin, Report: Sexual harassmentin Bangladesh, 16 july 2025

<<http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/law-rights/2017/07/16/sexual-harassment>>accessed 18Nov 2025

Chapter Five

Concern laws of Bangladesh relating to woman empowerment

5.1 National Woman Development Policy 2011

Sixteen years after Bangladesh endorsed the Beijing Plan of Action (1995) for gender equality at the UN Conference for Women, the Cabinet has finally okayed a National Policy for Women's Development in 2011. Its earlier incarnation formulated in 1997, in consultation with women's groups, and perhaps in deference to international commitments and aid promises never got off the ground. It then became hostage to fractionalized politics. A revisit to its history explains why the 2011 Policy remains conservative in limiting its recognition of women's rights in the public sphere and how institutional weaknesses and bureaucratic conservatism can frustrate implementation.⁵⁰ Women empowerment is one of those much discussed issues in the present world. It is regarded a crucial global agenda in the United States Human Development Report as well as in the UN. This is because women around the world are found to be oppressed, suppressed, tortured, victimized and are treated as the second class citizens. They are taken to be inferior to men. But in fact, they constitute half of the world's total population and they represent half of the world's human resources and potentials. So the development of any country is quite impossible ignoring half of its human resources- the women.⁵¹ In Bangladesh, women constitute a great majority of the population. Women development is, therefore, pre-condition to national development. It is imperative to establish equal opportunity and rights to ensure national development. The erstwhile Awami League government in accord with the promise made in the national election held on 12 June 1996 formulated for the first time National Women Development Policy in 1997. The main objective of this policy was to promote the cause of larger women society that had suffered abuse and neglect for ages. In 1997, the policy was formulated in wide consultation and exchange of views with the leaders of the society of women in this country reflecting long struggle to establish rights of women of this country. Later in 2004 the four party alliances along with BNP-Jamaat government made changes in the said policy and formulated their Women Development Policy. During caretaker government

⁵⁰ Hameeda Hossain , National Development policy, The Daily Star, Bangladesh, April 11

<<http://www.thedailystar.net/suppliments/20125/anniversary/part7/pg1>>accessed on 29 Nov 2025

⁵¹ Mohammad Mainuddin Mollah, 'Women empowerment in Bangladesh' Speech march 11

<https://www.academia.edu/21716635/Role_of_National_Women_Development_Policy_in_Women_Empowerment_of_Bangladesh_Problems_and_Prospects>accessed on 29 nov2025

Women Development Policy 2008 was made in revised form but that could not be put to effect. Bangladesh Awami League in its electoral manifesto of 2008 reiterated its promise to reinstate the Women Development Policy formulated by the erstwhile Awami League government in 1997 to ensure women empowerment, equal rights and opportunities. To implement electoral promise and to ensure women development and empowerment, the present government led by the humble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been formulating the National Women Development Policy 2011.⁵²

Background of Women Development Policy in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world that has a land area of only 1, 47, 570 square kilometers with a population of approximately 160 million people. The density of population in Bangladesh is 1015 people per square kilometer (BBS, 2011). For administrative purpose the country is divided into 7 divisions, 64 districts and 496 Upazillas. Of this total population, Muslims constitute almost 90 percent, whereas Hindus occupy about 9 percent and the followers of other religion hold about 1 percent respectively. Agriculture is the dominant sector of the economy occupying 80 percent of the total population contributing 25 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Bangladesh has made considerable progress in reducing poverty over the last few decades.⁵³

5.2 Objectives of National Women Development Policy

The Objectives of National Women Development Policy are as follows (GoB, 2011):

- a. To establish equal rights of men and women in areas of state and public life in the light of the constitution of Bangladesh;
- b. To ensure socio-economic, political, administrative and legal empowerment of women while establishing gender equality;
- c. To ensure full and equal participation of women in the mainstream socio-economic development recognizing women's contribution in socio-economic areas;
- d. To bring up women as educated and skilled human resources delivering them from the curse of poverty;

⁵² National Women Development Policy 2011 ' Ministry of Women and Children Affairs March 2011'
<<https://www.unescogym.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Bangladesh-National-Women-Policy-2011-English.pdf>>Accessed on 30nov 2017

⁵³ Rahman Siddiki Roll of women development policy in Bangladesh 11 April
<https://www.academia.edu/21716635/Role_of_National_Women_Development_Policy_in_Women_Empowerment_of_Bangladesh_Problems_and_Prospects>accessed on 29 nov2025

- e. To remove existing male-female disparities as well as to eliminate all forms of abuse of women and female children;
- f. To innovate and import technology favoring the interest of women and prohibit anti-women technologies.⁵⁴

5.3- Human Rights of Women and the Constitution

Bangladesh constitution is an engendering constitution, because it stipulates incorporation of specific space for women's rights explicitly.⁵⁵ Gender equality is a procedure for sharing out resources, programmers and decision makings in a way that ensures equal distribution of the resources, facilities between men and women and each have equal access to the same. While the aspiration of taking care of everyone in a similar manner may seem splendid, the notion of equal handling has a propensity to close the eyes to the fact that every individual is unique and dissimilar. People are divergent in their capacities, interests, resources and experiences and hence, it has been rightly observed by many that time has come to understand the importance of the difference between gender equality and gender equity.⁵⁶

The Constitution was written for the newly formed state of Bangladesh in 1972. The Constitution made under the directives of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman ensured human and fundamental rights of women. In article 27 of the constitution has it that, "all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law". The article 28(1) says, "the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth" The article 28(2) says, "women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life." The article 28(3) has it that, no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution." Article 28(4) says, "Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making special provision in favor of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens." Article

⁵⁴Mohammad Mainuddin Mollah Women empowerment, March 11 Space on role of women in national development.

<https://www.acadmia.edu/21716635/Role_of_NationalWomen,Development,Policy,inWomenEmpowerment_of_Bangladesh,_Problems_and_Prospects>accessed on 29 Nov 2025

⁵⁵ The independent The writer is Retired Joint Chief, Planning commission, Constitution and gender right 1 Oct 2016 <http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/62146>accessed on 30 Nov 2025

⁵⁶Tasmiah Nuhiya Ahmed ' Equality for women' 12:00 AM, March 29, last modified 22 am., March 29, 2016<<http://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/equality-women>>aAccessed on 30 Nov2025

29(1) contains, "there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the republic."⁵⁷ Article 29(2) has it that "no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the republic."⁵⁸ the article 65(3) there are 45 seats reserved for women and under article 9 the representation of women in the development of local government institutions.⁵⁹

5.4- Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010

The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act (DV Act) was enacted in the year 2010 to prevent and provide protection for women and children against domestic violence. The DV Act is especially significant in the context of Bangladesh as it is the first express recognition of the problem of domestic violence by the State. However, even after its enactment, domestic violence remains a daily reality for many women in Bangladesh.¹ A major factor contributing to the underutilization and ineffectiveness of the Act in combating domestic violence, is the social perception and understanding of the issue which continues to view domestic violence as a 'personal, family matter' as opposed to being a manifestation of gender based violence (GBV) requiring the intervention of the state.⁶⁰

Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010 was passed for establishing equal rights of women and children as prescribed in the constitution of Bangladesh for ensuring protection of women and children from family violence as also a signatory state to the UN Charter on Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination to Women, 1979 and the Child Rights Charter 1989.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Article 28, The constitution Of The People's Republic Of Bangladesh

⁵⁸ Human Rights Condition in Bangladesh AB Abu Siddiky march 11

<<http://www.assignmentpoint.com/arts/law/human-rights-condition-in-bangladesh.html>> Accessed 30 Nov 2025

⁵⁹ Ibid Pg-23

⁶⁰ Issita Datta , " Domestic violence' The Daily Star, Bangladesh 3 Feb 2025

<<http://archive.thedailystar.net/forum/2013/January/let.htm>> accessed 30 Nov 2025

⁶¹ Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010 Act no 58 of 2025

5.5 - Citizenship Act (Amended), 2009

The provision for giving citizenship by mother to child was made by the national parliament by amending the citizenship act in 2009.⁶² So we can see that in our country a women get nationality by mother to child.

5.6- Mobile Court Act, 2009

The executive magistrate was given power to take steps by linking Section 509 of the Bangladesh Penal Code in the schedule of Mobile Court Act to resist and prevent eve teasing and sexual harassment of the girls and women.⁶³

5.7- Prevention of Abuse of Women

It is every woman's fundamental right to live in safety and security in her home and community free from the threat of violence.⁶⁴ Preventing violence against women and girls includes work across many areas of our public services and community life: Gender equality – violence against women and girls is intimately related to women's persistent inequality. So if we want to prevent violence we must improve women's economic and social equality. Equal pay, fair housing and welfare policies, and better employment, education and training for women and girls. And we need to address inequalities related to race, disability, sexuality, gender identity and age if all women are to be equal and face less risk of abuse.⁶⁵

There is a number of legislation to resist and prevent abuse of women. The crimes and offenses like abuse of women, murder of women for dowry, women and child kidnapping and trafficking, rape, acid throwing, family violence, sexual harassment and other women related crimes are still being committed. Extra-judicial punishment is still being carried out in the name of misinterpretation of religion and fatwas in the garb of village arbitration. Enough forensic facilities to investigate the cases of abuse of women have not been in place as yet. Notable in this area has been a National DNA Laboratory and 5 divisional DNA Screening Lab under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs are assisting in identifying the offenders. In many cases, the related cases are never filed with law enforcing agencies and justice is delayed for different reasons. In the divisional towns, Women

⁶² Citizenship Act (Amended), 2009 Act no 17 of 2009

⁶³ Mobile Court Act, 2009 Act no 59 of 2009

⁶⁴ Sailakhanom, Status of women, Women in their situation, 28 Oct 2014 Volume2 Pg 1

⁶⁵ Drhamidur Majid, End violence against women, preventing abuse Speech 2011 UK Website 2018

<<http://www.endviolenceagainstawomen.org.uk/preventing-abuse/>>accessed on 30 Nov 2025

Support Centers have been commissioned to assist women and child daughters' victim of abuse. The victim women get shelter, legal advice free of cost and get assistance in conducting cases against the offenders. One Stop Crisis Center (OCC) has been set up in 6 divisional towns and through this from one place co-ordinated health care facilities, legal services, police support, shelter and rehabilitation of the victims are arranged. The victim women are given psycho-social counseling services through the National Trauma Counseling Centre at the Women Affairs Department. Alongside these, opportunities are offered for self reliance by imparting them training on various vocations. The assistance is also rendered through the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Women Affairs Department; Women abuse Prevention Cell in the National Women Organization and helpline. Three Victim Support Centers have been set up under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Women Abuse Prevention Committees have been set up respectively at district level led by the Deputy Commissioner, at Upazilla level led by the UNO and at UP level led by the UP Chairman. The District Women Affairs Officer and Upazilla Women Affairs Officer act as member secretary to these committees. 44 women 10 and Children Abuse and Repression Tribunals have been set up all over the country for the prevention of abuse of women and children.⁶⁶

⁶⁶Limana Solaiman Mridha” Preventing violence against women” 6 December 2025, The independent
<<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details>>accessed 30 nov2025

Chapter Six

Present condition of Woman Empowerment in Bangladesh

6.1 - Institutional Framework and Strategy

The women of Bangladesh are no more only house wife and insider worker. They came out from the home and took the challenges to change the economy, politics, and social culture in Bangladesh very rapidly. These activate draw attention of developed countries towards Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a role model of women empowerment and development in the world map. Bangladesh faces big challenges in religious and cultural aspects but the powerful and dedicated women took the challenges and overcome all barriers for their success.

Recently, we saw, prime minister of Bangladesh received 828 applications for 38 women reserved seats for the 10th parliamentary election. So we can understand the progress, interest and awareness of women in politics in Bangladesh. Therefore, we cannot say now women are sitting only in home but they came out for power and politics and leadership role in Bangladesh. This is another form of successful women empowerment in Bangladesh. The implementation of women development policy and work plan is the basic responsibility of the Government. This responsibility can be discharged on a sound basis through building up a well-organized and broad based institutional system. Efforts shall be made to include women development perspective in all the GO and NGO activity. The following measures shall be taken through some strategy.⁶⁷

6.2- National Level & Upazilla Level

A global report has ranked Bangladesh 8th in terms of women's political empowerment. A foreign office statement said, "Bangladesh was praised at the meeting for enhancing its women labor force from 24 percent (2010) to 36 percent in 2013 and significant representation of women at highest political levels."⁶⁸ Article 9 of the Bangladesh constitution proclaims that, 'The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special

⁶⁷Beverly Down , Women Empowerment and frame work, Human Resource Development International, Volume 14,20011 Issue 2

⁶⁸ Debasish Das' Women's empowerment in Bangladesh : a secret of progress speech 24 January 2024<http://www.risingbd.com/english/Womens_empowerment_in_Bangladesh_A_secret_of_progress> accessed on 27 Nov 2025

representation shall be given, as far as possible, to peasants, workers, and women.⁶⁹ The lowest level of local government in Bangladesh is known as the Union Parishad. At the local level, women's representation is still insignificant, but is gradually growing. In the 1973 local government elections, for the first time, only one woman was elected as chairperson. In the 1977 and 1984 local government elections, four women won as chairpersons respectively. In the 2001 Union Parishad (UP) elections, as many as 102 women candidates contested for 4,443 UP chairmanship positions countrywide where only 20 women were elected. However, in the 2003⁷⁰ Union Parishad elections, the number of women candidates who contested for the position of UP chairmanships increased to 232 from 102 in 1997. But this does not mean that the major parties and the media are encouraging women leaders who enter into politics at the local level. At present, there is not a single woman city mayor in Bangladesh. No of women received a nomination from the major parties to contest for the mayoral position to the six-city corporation's elections. For the first time in 1994, as many as 19 women ward commissioners were elected to the reserved seats of the Dhaka City Corporations. Table-3 provides the data of the elected female chairpersons to the Union Parishad of Bangladesh during 1973- 2003.⁷¹

6.3- Grassroots Level

At the grassroots levels i.e. in village and union the women shall be organized as self-sustained group. To strengthen these groups shall be transformed into a registered organization under different government organizations. Tapping resources from the GO and NGO sources, banks, other financial institutions, an intimate relationship of these organization with Union Parishad, Upazilla Parishad, Zilla Parishad, Municipality and City Corporation shall established and their activity co-ordinated. Over and above, the inclusion of local development perspectives of all the grassroots organizations shall be encouraged and assistance given.⁷²

⁶⁹ Article 9, The Constitution of The People's Republic of Bangladesh

⁷⁰ A. N. M. ZakirHossain , Women Empowerment in Rural Local Government of Bangladesh , Lecturer (of Political Science), Department of Agricultural Economics, Bangladesh Agricultural University Volume 10 No. 2, Feb. 2025

⁷¹ Ibid Pg-29

⁷² Ahmed, Shafi and Nabi, Bela ,One Decade of Bangladesh Under Women Leadership.,Alochana Magazine,Volume 11 ,2022 Page 4

6.4- Co-operation with NGOs and Social Organizations in Women Development

Based on a questionnaire, we are able to provide some quantitative assessment on what women themselves think about how their involvement with these NGOs has contributed to their empowerment. The questionnaire asked the women specifically on (1) if they see a change in their status due to their interaction with NGOs, (2) if awareness building has increased due to NGO programs, (3) how the amount of capital they own has changed from before and after becoming NGO members, (4) how their employment status has changed from before and after becoming NGO members, and (5) how their involvement in business activities changed.⁷³

Women Development in its true sense is a great task. In it efforts shall be made to coordinate the activity of the GO and NGOs so that participation of all sections of people could be ensured and made possible. The following steps shall be taken to involve NGOs and social organizations: a. The voluntary and social organizations playing special role in development and establishing rights of women in all stages of women development at the village, union, upazilla, district, division and national levels shall be involved and coordinated with their activities. Support services shall also be rendered aimed at women development and empowerment. Their co-operation in all government activity shall be ensured. Programs shall be adopted and implemented with assistance from these institutions to change social attitude to women to play proper role in the process of women empowerment. b. The women organizations implementing women development from national level to the grass roots, protection of rights of women, creating awareness, prevention of abuse of women, giving legal assistance and similar programs shall be given support and assistance to strengthen them. The women's organizations making such programs and implementing shall be given support and co-ordinated.⁷⁴

6.5- Research on Woman and Gender Equality

Measures shall be taken to increase efficiency and skill to conduct wider research in the matter of women development and gender equality. All research institutions shall be encouraged to conduct research in the issues pertaining to women development, empowerment and women and children's rights. Separate gender research and educational

⁷³Amin, Ruhul; Yiping Li; and Ashrad U. Ahmed (1996). 'Women's Credit Programs and Family Planning in Rural Bangladesh.' Volume. 22, No. 4 (December), Pg. 158-162

institutes shall be set up wherefrom necessary information inputs shall be supplied to the policy makers.⁷⁵

6.6- Women Development Training Institute

Training centers at division, district and Upazilla shall be set up in addition to strengthening of the existing Women Development Training Institute at Dhaka. These centers shall impart technical and vocational training and training rights of the women, their education and related awareness.⁷⁶

6.7- Work Plan and Program Strategy Financial System

Other Ministries/Divisions/Departments/organizations including the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and also the GO and NGOs at the district, upazilla and union level shall undertake work plan to implement the National Women Development Policy with the time limit fixed. 28 46.2. Gender perspective shall be reflected in the respective work plans of all the ministries/divisions/departments/organizations to protect balanced rights and interests in all sectors. 46.3. A fixed time frame shall be set for implementation of all work plans and programs. 46.4. The progress of all work plans and programs shall be reviewed at fixed interval for monitoring and evaluation. 46.5. The official making work plans and programs shall be given appropriate training at PATC, Planning Academy and other institutes on topics of gender and development to ensure correct reflection in work plans and programs of the different ministries/Departments/ organizations.⁷⁷ With this end in view, gender and development issues shall be included in curricula and courses. 46.6. Special importance to be given to the social awareness program for development of women. The awareness program shall include among other things : (1) removal of defamatory statements and remarks to women from the legislations and rules and other documents;(2) awareness of executives of ministry and corporate bodies, officials of the Law and Justice Department, policy makers, officials of law enforcing agencies, and officials of the NGO's; (3) inclusion into curriculum the gender relationship, rights, issues pertaining to women development and training shall receive special importance. 46.7. Sensitization of women program specially formulated at all levels of the society shall be regularly conducted on

⁷⁵Subrine Haque, 'Role of National Women Development Policy in Women Empowerment of Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects' Volume 5 2025 Pg-12

⁷⁶ Ibid Pg-30

⁷⁷ IbidPg-31

sound financing. This shall be drawn to the notice of administration and in particular, law enforcing agencies, judiciary and GO-NGO officials. The sensitization Women Issue Program shall be gradually integrated into current training program run by both GO and NGOs. 46.8. Particular emphases shall also be given to prevention of women abuse program for development of women. Different Go and NGOs shall be motivated to adopt well planned program. To serve the purpose, the programs shall include: awareness, legal advice and education, punitive measures i.e. filing cases to court of law, safe shelter and rehabilitation for conducting the case so filed, financial assistance etc. In this area, the central women and children abuse prevention cell in addition to other women and children abuse prevention cell activity jurisdiction shall be expanded and strengthened.

6.8- Co-operation Between GO and NGO

Possible links of co-operation between the GOs and NGOs starting from the grassroots levels to national level for implementation of the women development policy. The private sector voluntary institutions shall extended appropriate and timely assistance from the government. The give and take through regular contacts and meetings and workshops shall continue between Go and NGOs. In some areas, women development program under public-private joint partnership.⁷⁸

6.9- Women Empowerment and International Co-operation

International, regional and sub-regional co-operation shall be encouraged through bilateral and multilateral financial and technical co-operation and exchanges of experience and technology aimed at empowerment of women⁷⁹The UK`s Department for International Development are working to address constraints to the empowerment of adolescent girls in developing countries. Researchers mapped organizations that competitively seek innovative ideas from both the private and non-profit sectors potentially to reach girls, youth or women in developing country contexts and provides support in the forms of finance and technical assistance to bring their ideas to market.

In 2008, Africa began the Initiative for the Economic Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs Project (IEEWEP) with funding by ExxonMobil. The goal of the project was to increase women`s income and participation in local business in Southern Chad. In a

⁷⁸Chowdhury, Najma “Women in Politics in Bangladesh” Ministry of Welfare & Women Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, Volume 11,Pg -268

⁷⁹ Ibid Pg-32

society that relies heavily on agriculture, IEEWEP streamlined the way women farmed and took their goods to market by training them on better agricultural practices and opening two new agro-processing centers. In the past three years, more than 1,000 women have worked through a graduated business development project, which has diversified their income sources and increased their annual income by approximately 70%.

Chapter Seven

Concluding Chapter

7.1 Findings

We describe in detail downwards on what we find in preceding to analysis the total situation of the research work.

- (1) Women representation is very limited in different level of government especially in ministries.
- (2) Regularly women in mass representative organizations is scarcely as candidates.
- (3) Women do not exercise the power of decision making in every sphere of politics and bureaucracy.
- (4) Different wage rate for women.
- (5) We keep a great role in garments sector as wager
- (6) They are playing important roles in education
- (7) Their participation in politics are increasing
- (8) The women are being solvent by the opportunity of micro credit.

7.2 Recommendations

1. Here some are some of the strategy of Empowerment of Women.
2. Women should participate more and more in politic to establish their rights in politics.
3. The working field of women should be extended to increase the economic power of women.
4. Social attitude towards men and women should be changed. Through social movement. Along with political parties women organizations should come forward along for this
5. The govt. should be cordial and active to implement the effective steps in the rules and regulation committee.
6. Women should be appointed in the higher administration with post of cabinet secretary and in the ministry and department.
7. To eradicate the disparity of men- women wage reformation in wage distribution is necessary.
8. Women workers can't protest against the injustice of the higher authority for lack of the help of law.

9. Political and lawful rights of women should be included in the education syllabus. All the international agreements against women persecution including extinction of all discriminatory activities against women should be implemented fully or to take steps to implement.
10. Reserve seat for women should be maintained for UP level to all sectors.
11. They should not be nominated for reserve seat, rather should be elected directly.
12. We should behave with the female child equally in the house and outside the house and the positive aspect of female child should be shown.

7.3 Conclusion

Women's empowerment can only be achieved when we include men and boys. Men are often those who define and keep women within their boundaries. But when we engage with them they realize that their wives' empowerment benefits the whole family. Promoting gender equality and empowering women is the key to lifting entire families out of poverty - and it defines our programs worldwide. The realization of women empowerment and true development of the country is interrelated. For a long time development had been defined in terms of gross national product and per capita income of world. In course of time definition of development was revised and in the place of 'Property-centered' theory "human-centered theory got prominence. Achievement of true development was started to be identified with fulfillment of basic women needs, because half of the female all over the country. If the state of any country fails to ensure women's security in crisis, Provide justice for women, education and work, if the conditions of unemployment, poverty and inequality are worse that country cannot be said to have achieved true development only man empowerment can't be enough for true development. The framers of the Constitution placed the basic women rights in the Fundamental Principles of State Policy which are not enforceable by a court of law. The obligation of the state was limited by conditioning the fulfillment of these rights with the availability of resources. For the change of the world or development need to Empowerment of women, For that, we must change our outlook and treated they are equal with men. Every state must take proper step to ensure their education and have to keep extra budget for women financial support. In the present time only some countries they are developed for that those countries ensure women rights. Always, we should mind that without women empowerment society cannot developed so women empowerment is essential for change our society.

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